

REMARKS

This Response is filed with respect to the Office Action dated December 26, 2007, the unextended period for response to which is March 26, 2008.

Claims 12 and 16-28 are pending and have been rejected. By the Amendment above, Claims 12, 24 and 25 have been amended; and new Claims 29-30 have been added, antecedent basis for which exists throughout the specification, including the figures themselves. The amendment raises no new issues, nor would it entail the need for further search on the part of the Examiner. Entry of the amendment is within the discretion of the Examiner and is respectfully requested.

As discussed in the interview, Applicant has included the word "maximal" to make clear that at least one ridge extends beyond the maximal periphery of the preformed mass, within a cartilage plug of this invention. This can be compared, for instance, with figure 4A of Stone et al. in which it can be seen that the elements characterized as ridges by the Examiner are all well within the maximal periphery of element (12).

Although the presence of even a single such ridge distinguishes a device of the present invention from the disclosure of Stone et al., Applicant has also added new dependent claims directed to preferred embodiments wherein indeed a plurality, up to substantially all such ridges have such a configuration.

In view of the above remarks, it is submitted that the claims are in condition for allowance. Reconsideration and withdrawal of all rejections is respectfully requested.

The Commissioner is hereby authorized to charge payment of any additional fees under or credit any overpayment to Deposit Account No. 06-1910.

Respectfully submitted,

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